

# Australian media content is dependent on commercial success

[Parts of the World](#), [Australia](#)



In Australia, people obtain the information they want through media, from ink on paper to telephones and television to the Internet (Bagdikian 2000, p. 21). Media in Australia is broadly accessible and supplies to an extensive range of audiences. Ninety-nine percent of Australian households have a television, and all households have at least one radio. Yet there are arguments regarding media content.

The competitions between different kinds of mass media have a bearing on media content. Newspapers in order to keep their place in the world of news reporting, started dealing with more news in larger detail than did television and radio news. Newspaper articles presented historical context for recent events and thorough analysis from two or more perspectives. Also, the arrival of Internet stiffened the competition and somehow lowered standards of reporting. Bigger competitive strain makes it harder for the media to preserve customary prohibition especially on the subject of politics (Engelman 1996, pp. 10-20).

Last April of 2005, there is an alarming decline in the sales of newspapers. Newspapers in several of Australia's largest cities are losing readers. Reports said that this decline can be attributed to time pressures, the economy and the Internet. Peter Wylie, News' nationwide managing director, said another causal factor has been a modification in the timing of the newspaper's promotions to the April-to-June circulation period rather than January-to-March. What is more, when people hear shocking news, they would preferably browse the Internet sooner than wait for next day's circulation of papers (Khan 2006).

Another limiting factor regarding media content is the government regulation. Examples are law of obscenity or pornography and law of libel. Media contents must observe such to avoid penalties and further conflicts (Demsetz ; Lehn 1985, pp. 1155-1177). The Australian film and television industry is small by world standards and confined by a raft of local media content rules. Certain 55% of commercial television primetime viewing should be Australian made. At upwards of \$250, 000 an hour for quality drama is a big investment. Moreover, the Australian government opted to keep the foreign-ownership limits in its 1992 Broadcasting Act. Per se, Australia maintains to prohibit foreign control of a broadcasting license and regulate foreign ownership of broadcasting firms to 20%.

Ratings also play a big role on media content. The ratings system used in commercial broadcasting came up from the longing of sponsors to discern how many people they were getting with their advertising. The volume of a given program's audience is then projected derived from the results. These forecasts, or ratings, influence the price of advertisements during the show and, in due course, whether the show is gainful enough to stay or continue on the air (Engelman 1996, pp. 15-18).

Furthermore, to shoot up sales, Australian media resort to pay TV. Approximately 23% of Australian households had Pay TV by the end of 2003.

In Australia, many people fear that media will turn into a hyper-commercialized system. Some argue that several aspects of mediaculture now fair game for commercial exploitations which might lead to full-scale commercialization. The major commercial media organizations in

Australia have put interests in some commercial entities. This can have an influence on the information audiences get. The last study of media ownership in Australia (1999) showed that of 12 daily papers, 10 were owned by only two organizations, Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation and John Fairfax Holdings. The West Australian and the Canberra Times are the only autonomously owned dailies. Publishing & Broadcasting Limited has diverse interests including the Nine Network (television), The Bulletin & Women's Weekly (magazines), Crown Casino & Ticketek. This could lead to the cross promotion of vested interests. News Corporation has interests in the film, magazine, publishing, sports & television industries. This can affect on the way information is communicated in that News Corporation can also promote their other products & services. Southern Cross Broadcasting owns numerous entities, including Channel 9 Adelaide as well as several radio stations. This could influence the advertisements in television programs and radio broadcasts. For instance, radio talk shows may talk about Southern Cross programs much more often than those produced by other companies. Also, advertisements aired during Southern Cross television shows will involve radio stations, sponsors and affiliates. Another outcome of major companies owning more than one form of media in Australia with a broad audience is that the companies may put partiality and censorship in their numerous media forms, thus controlling what information is presented to their Australian audiences. For instance, one company may give out the same information to their television network and newspaper, neglecting some information that may be significant to the Australian public.

Nowadays, media relies significantly on advertising for revenue. Without advertising, several of these forms of mass communication might not exist to the extent that they do today (Khan 2006). Yet, several critics advise that since advertising plays a key role, it might exercise unnecessary effect on the news media, thus limiting the free flow of information. In this regard, journalistic professionalism may not safeguard the news from biases of owners and advertisers. Consequently, there is about 50% increase in the number of commercials on network TV in Australia in the past decade; the progress of commercially-saturated kids' programming as debatably the fastest-growing and most gainful branch of the TV industry in the 1990s. The backside of this commercialism is the weakening of public service of the concept that there is any objective to our media except to generate money for shareholders (McChesney 2000, pp. 60-65).

Advertising also influence media programming in other ways. For instance, companies that sponsor TV programs favor fairly wholesome programming to prevent upsetting a mass audience. This partiality affects TV networks to highlight this type of programming. The consequence is that society may be deprived of the benefits of being able to watch stimulating entertainment/news programs on controversial issues. Since advertisers are interested in drawing the 18 to 34 year olds who account for most consumers spending, television shows are frequently designed with this audience in mind. If the ratings prove that a program is not drawing large audiences, advertisers frequently pull out support, which triggers a program to be canceled. Accordingly, shows that are more likely to fascinate and to be of value to older audiences are not created (McChesney 2000, pp. 60-65).

To combat such issues, Australian government created the Australian Content Quotas for Advertising in 1999. The aim of this is to guarantee that social and cultural intentions of broadcasting legislation, comprising of supporting a sense of Australian identity, integrity and cultural diversity, relate to commercial television advertising.

Any form of media is continuing to serve its purpose albeit many arguments behind its contents. Each improvement in any form has created apprehensions yet each has encouraged democracy by making people better informed or up-to-date and eventually making it simpler for them to communicate their opinions.

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